City of Renton

Tree Retention

Planning Commission Presentation

January 4, 2006

Issue

◆ Current code does not generally require tree retention.

◆ Trees must only be preserved in sensitive areas.

◆ Large developments are clear cutting building sites.

Why Tree Retention?

◆ No Retained Trees

◆ Retained Trees

Tree retention: preserves natural drainage features, prevents erosion, provides habitat, insulates against wind and sun, buffers noise, reduces pollution, and is aesthetically pleasing.

Code Review- Major Trees

Existing Code

◆ Trees, regardless of size, are treated similarly.

Proposed Fix

◆ Designate major trees that should be protected.

◆ Evergreens larger than 8" diameter.

◆ Broadleaf larger than 12" diameter.

Code Review- Retention

Existing Code

◆ Only requires retention of trees in critical areas and buffers.

◆ The internal area created by the perimeter setbacks is considered the land clearing line.

Proposed Fix

◆ Require major tree retention in perimeter setbacks.

◆ 25% internal area major tree retention for residential uses

◆ 5% internal area major tree retention for commercial and industrial uses

Code Review-Retention

Existing Code

- Allows exemptions for: emergencies, diseased trees, utility and road expansion, and commercial nurseries and agriculture.

- Allows minor tree cutting activities, with lots under ½ acre exempt from all requirements.

Proposed Fix

- Exemptions to remain the same.

- Allows minor tree cutting, but does not exempt small lots from major tree requirements.

Code Review- Incentives

Existing Code

◆ No incentive for tree retention.

Proposed Fix

◆ 3 smaller trees (over 3" diameter) with overlapping canopies may be substituted as a major tree.

◆ Some trees may count as two toward meeting retention requirements

Code Review- Incentives

Interior area trees may qualify for double credit:

◆ Very large trees 60' or higher and more than 24" diameter for evergreens and 30" or greater for broadleaf trees

◆ A major tree in a grouping of five trees with overlapping canopies

◆ A major tree that provides building energy savings through wind protection or shade
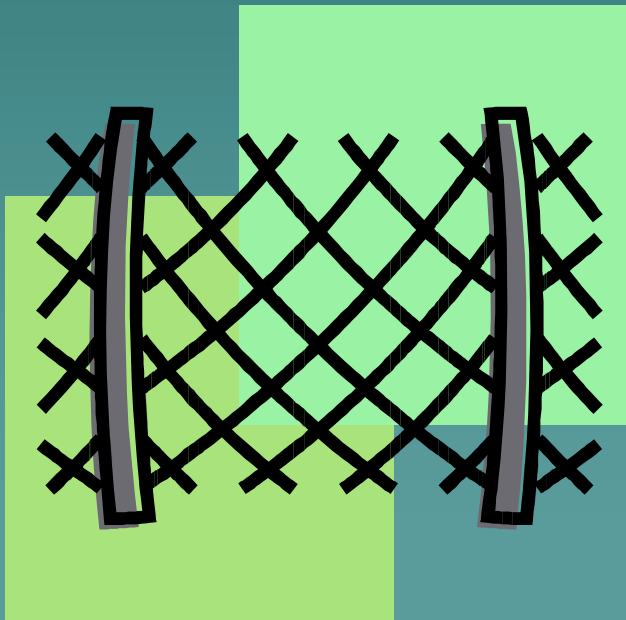
Code Review- Incentives

Proposed Incentives for Double Credit, cont.:

◆ Major trees of unique or unusual species

◆ Major trees within 25' of critical area buffer

◆ Major tree greater than 18" diameter that provides valuable wildlife habitat.

Code Review- Protection

Existing Code

◆ Retained trees must be protected during construction.

Proposed Fix

◆ Increase protection requirements to include construction of a temporary fence around the drip line of all retained major trees.

Code Review- Replacement

Existing Code

◆ No requirement for replacing required trees if they must be removed.

Proposed Fix to replace major trees:

◆ Transplant with a major tree, or

◆ Replace with trees a minimum of 3" diameter at a rate of two inches diameter for every inch removed

Code Review- Maintenance

Existing Code

◆ No requirement to maintain retained trees.

Proposed Fix

◆ Maintenance required for all retained trees for the life of the project.

◆ Performance bonds required for two years after project completion.

Code Review- Nomenclature

Existing Code

- ◆ Named "Tree Cutting and Land Clearing Regulations"

Proposed Fix

- ◆ Re-name "Tree Retention and Land Clearing Regulations"

As they say, the devil is in the details

Feedback

◆ What measures are necessary to ensure adequate tree retention?

CITY OF RENTON